

THE RELIGIOUS MONITOR.

AUGUST, 1824.

From the London Christian's Magazine.

THOUGHTS ON HEBREWS IV. 3.—

For we which have believed do enter into rest.

'Tis a truth, attested by the experience of thousands, respecting the consolation attending the paths of religion, that "a stranger intermeddleth not with their joy;" and what still enhances the possession, 'tis a "joy that no man taketh from them." 'Tis indeed true, that the general idea the people of the world have respecting a life of holiness, is, that it sours the comforts of life, and makes the possessors of it either melancholy or mad; but you, Christian, and I, can set to our seal of the truth of the Apostle's assertions, that as believers in Jesus we have entered on, and do indeed enjoy real rest; a rest that before we were ignorant of; but now we find it is a way of pleasantness; and all the paths, yea, the most rugged of them, are paths of peace. 'Tis true these words may have reference to an external rest, which the Hebrews entered on by believing in Christ; for they, when under the Mosaic dispensation, were under obligations to the performance of the ceremonial law, which while it held

up to the view of faith a Saviour to come, yet the Apostle calls it a burden that "neither they nor their fathers were able to bear," Acts xv. 10. The expensive nature of those sacrifices, as offered under the law, was a burden that under the gospel dispensation we are freed from: nor was it possible that the daily offerings which were made, could answer the important end of making the comers thereunto perfect, Heb. x. 1. and consequently there could be no real rest. But the believer in Jesus may properly be said to enter into rest; as by the one offering Jesus our great High-priest has made, he has for ever perfected those who are sanctified. Heb. x. 14. These words can by no means be confined to an external rest; and I think it would be doing injustice to the subject thus to limit them; when they evidently extend to that soul-rest which the Christian even here participates, as an earnest of that rest that remains for him above.—Who can describe the joy that soul feels, that has entered on that rest, arising from a sense of pardon through the blood of Jesus! and this the Christian knows something of, by sweet experience.—Something, did I say? yea, there are seasons when he can use the language of appropriation, and say,

"He has loved me, and given himself for me—yea, he has washed me from all my sins in his own blood." None can form an adequate idea of this, but him who has felt his guilty and depraved condition, and fled for refuge to this blessed hope the gospel holds forth to view; and when this is the case, the soul knows what the Apostle meant, when he said, "Being justified by faith we have peace with God." Rom. v. 1. Let your experiences, Christians, speak, and they will testify with me, that one moment of this peace, is of more value than all the world besides:—to view Jesus as our great sacrifice, delivering us from the guilt of all our transgressions, by bearing the punishment due to them on his own body on the tree; and so bringing us into a state of pardon with that God, whom we had so greatly offended: well might one cry, "Herein is love." And this is one part of that rest which the Christian enjoys by believing, even in this state of sin and imperfection.

Secondly. By believing we do enter into that rest that arises from a sense of justification and acceptance before God. The Apostle to the Romans asks this question;—"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God who justifies; and if we ask, how does God justify sinners, his word informs us, Rom. iii. 26. that it is Christ's righteousness which is now declared, as that only in which God can be just, and yet justify sinners. God is infinite holiness: and nothing but perfect holiness can come before him with acceptance. We as sinners are destitute of this holiness, even though grace may have changed the heart; for the remains of depravity that still dwells in us, taints every duty we

perform: and on that account they are exceedingly offensive to God. Our compassionate High-priest knew this; and therefore he not only suffered the penalty due to sin, but also obeyed the law: and by so doing made it honourable: he fulfilled all righteousness, and that for his people. 'Tis this righteousness God accepts, and this righteousness believers are called to exercise faith on; for this is the "righteousness of God by faith;" and if you and I, Christian, have fled to this complete obedience, then we know what true peace means: it is here only we have rest, though the holy law of God appears with all its awful curses; and justice, with drawn sword, ready to see them executed; yet even then the believer can with the poet say,

"My faith can answer thy demands,
By pleading what my Lord has done.

Yea, though conscience may bring a thousand accusations against him, accusations that he feels himself guilty of, yet one of faith's looks on Jesus, as the end of the law for righteousness to believers, stills the tempest, and restores peace to the soul.

Need I ask you, Christians, if you know any thing of this soul-rest? if you are christians, I am sure I need not; it has been, and still is, your earnest desire to be found in this blessed robe; and you count all things besides but dung an dross:—happy case; to such there is no condemnation, nor shall any thing pluck such out of Christ's hands.

Thirdly. By believing in Jesus we have a rest from sin, as to its dominion; "For sin shall not have dominion over Christ's people."—By nature, sin has the dominion

over us, and we are its willing servants: not by constraint; but we love it and indulge it. But when God's Spirit convinces us of our real condition, then we see what sin is; how offensive it is to God; how much it makes us unlike him: and I am satisfied if our convictions are of a right kind, we shall not rest in desires of pardon without having in connection therewith, "a new heart, and a right spirit." The desires of our souls will be, that the Lord would take away all iniquity from us: for old things are done away—all is become new; we shall have new pursuits, new desires, new delights; and we shall have in a degree, "put off the old man with his deeds." But those things are the effect of the work of God's Spirit on our souls; and faith is the means by which they are accomplished; and in proportion as faith is exercised on Christ, so will our victory over those things be: "For this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," says an Apostle: and the more we are made conquerors over those, the more real rest shall we enjoy. May I appeal to your experiences, Christians; what is it breaks your peace with God, deprives you of communion with him, and makes you go on your way mourning? I doubt not but you will answer, sin: and you will also acknowledge, that the nearer you live to him, and the more you are enabled to act faith on Christ, the more real rest your souls enjoy.—JUNIOR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN'S MAGAZINE.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

You know it is natural for every one that loves God to love also his word, as being the copy of

his heart—the exact delineation of his nature—the express declaration of his will; in which every thing necessary to salvation is revealed, containing all that concerns our faith and obedience. It follows, certainly, if we love it we shall be very often thinking upon it; and when we think upon it, we shall desire to understand it. A text in St. Paul's first epistle to Timothy iii. 9. where speaking of Deacons, he says, *Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience*; suggested the following reflections:

Faith may here intend the doctrines which are *objects of faith*—the *profession of faith*, or the real possession of it considered as a *divine grace*. While a Christian preserves his conscience pure, living unspotted from the world—having his conversation as becometh the gospel—resembling his divine Lord, who was holy, harmless, and undefiled, walking worthy the vocation wherewith he is called—adorning the doctrine of God his Saviour, while he lives above the world; walking by faith and not by sight; that is, I humbly apprehend, under the direction and influence of invisible heavenly objects—while he has a conscience purified by the blood of Christ, and void of offence towards God and man, *he is a mystery to the unregenerate part of mankind*. His springs of action, his motives, and the governing principles of his life, are to them unknown, and they wonder how it is! They are astonished that he is not inclined to love what they so passionately admire; and they think him to be, what he really is, *a person of a different nature*.

But if he be found wandering from the path of duty, conforming in the least degree to their sinful customs and practices, through the

overcoming influences of Satan's temptations; or be allured by the bewitching charms of this painted idol, the world; or overpowered by the Devil's confederates within him; or by whatever means, he be seduced to join with the world in the commission of sin; then *the mystery is unfolded, and the secret intuitively discovered.* They immediately exclaim, "Art thou also become as one of us? We thought you pretended not to belong to the world; we used to think you a strange creature: but now we see plainly you are no better than ourselves. You, who formerly was afraid of coming near us, lest you should be defiled and corrupted, do not scruple now to make one of our jovial company. We are fully convinced of what we have been always inclined to believe, that there is no reality in religion. It is an idle fiction!—it is priestcraft!—it is composed of old wives' fables!—it is any thing!—it is nothing! Your conduct confirms the truth of this. Where are now your fine pretences to sanctification and godliness?"

Thus they will soon give evidence that the Devil is their father, by imitating his mode of action; which is, first to seduce poor sinners to transgress, and then bitterly accuse them of it. They, with their father, always act perfectly consistent with their character, as *accusers of the brethren.*

Let true christians learn hence, carefully to preserve the mystery of the faith; to be very anxious to have a pure conscience, or rather to beg of God the Holy Spirit to make their consciences clean, and purify their hearts by faith, that they effectually prevent all such accusations; lest by opening the mouths of gainsayers against them,

they make their own lives uncomfortable, lay stumbling blocks in the way of their brethren, grieve the Holy Spirit, plant their dying pillow with thorns, and dishonour the profession they make of the spotless religion of Jesus.

W. N.

ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT THE ORDINATION OF THE REV. JAMES IRVINE TO THE PASTORAL INSPECTION OF THE ASSOCIATE CONGREGATION OF HEBRON, N. Y. JULY 7TH, 1824.

BY THE REV. ANDREW STARK, OF NEW-YORK.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

You have now been solemnly set apart to the office of the holy ministry, and to the pastoral inspection of this congregation, by the laying on of the hands of this presbytery. You are constituted an ambassador for CHRIST, and a steward in his household. It thus becomes your duty to explain and enforce the mysteries of the kingdom of God—Mysteries that have been hid for ages and generations, but which are now made manifest in the preaching of the gospel.

This is an office of great honour and usefulness, but it involves in it a very high degree of responsibility, and has its discouragements and difficulties, as well as its hopes and its joys. In undertaking it, the minister of the Gospel becomes responsible, not merely for his own soul, but also for his faithful dealing with the souls of others. If he warn not the wicked, and they die in their sins, their blood will I require at his hand saith the LORD. In taking upon you

this highly interesting charge, let me beseech you, that "with meekness you would suffer the word of exhortation;" which it becomes my duty now to address to you, and which I also desire to apply to myself, with a view to that account we must in a short time give of our stewardship. In doing this I will make use of no other exhortation than that of Paul to Timothy. "Take heed unto thyself and to thy doctrine, continue in them, for in doing so, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

Suffer me then freely to speak to you of your personal conduct, and your ministerial labours.

1 As to your personal conduct. Let me exhort you to examine closely into the state of your own heart. Our first enquiry should be into our sincere belief of those truths which we are to teach others. This should be made the foundation of a faithful discharge of our Ministerial duties. For to make these duties either pleasing or profitable to us, it is essentially necessary that we be able in some measure to say "that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." This is of singular advantage in leading us to speak suitably to the case of others. For if we watch diligently the corruptions of our own hearts, we have only faithfully to delineate those, and we will commend ourselves to every man's conscience. "As in water face answereth to face, so doth the heart of man to man." Moreover we will become more earnest in persuading

others when we ourselves know the terrors of the Lord.

Besides seeking an acquaintance with your own heart take heed also to your outward conduct. "Be careful to maintain good works" and "let your conversation be such as becometh the gospel of Christ. Immorality and vice are offensive in every man, but they are odious and monstrous in the servant of Christ. You are well aware that no labour, no industry nor talent, will ever convince men of your sincerity, nor make your work successful unless you in some measure walk as Christ also walked. As a minister of the gospel you are like a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid. Let your light therefore shine before men that others seeing your good works may glorify your Father who is in heaven. "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

As to your conduct towards the people of your charge, in all things study their edification. In your intercourse with them endeavour to connect gravity with humility and to mix dignity with condescension, that you may secure that respect which is necessary to the successful discharge of your duty. Do not court the society of the rich to the neglect of the poor who may stand most in need of your counsel and direction, remembering that God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him. Make it your study to honour piety

and worth rather than opulence and power, for the fashion of this world passeth away. But whilst you study to please all men to edification, do not suffer any spirit of accommodation to draw you aside from the truth as it is in Jesus. When you seek to please men let it only be for their edification, but edified they cannot be if the truth be gainsayed. For if we seek to please men we are not the servants of Christ.

As an ecclesiastical Ruler let a desire to promote the glory of God, the good of his church and the benefit of the people of your charge be the leading principles of your conduct. Let no schemes of policy however wise or sagacious they may appear, ever divert you from that simplicity and godly sincerity so becoming in a Christian Minister: For be assured that however enticing worldly policy may be, it can neither be permanently honourable to yourself nor beneficial to the church. But by following out the course of conduct to which I have adverted, you will be in the path of duty, and whatever success you may have you will be satisfied with yourself, and you will have the testimony of a good conscience, that with simplicity and Godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God you have had your conversation in the world.

2. Suffer me to add a few words in relation to your doctrine. In taking upon you the ministerial office you have become a steward in the household of Christ, and it is required in a steward that a man be found faith-

ful; your professed employment is to preach Christ crucified. Let then the personal glory of Christ be the great and ultimate end of your preaching. These are times in which many pervert the truth, and endeavour to obscure the glory of Christ by denying his divinity. For this cause it is the more incumbent on you to proclaim to men that he is the only begotten son of God—higher than the angels and the only Saviour—to declare him to be one with the Father—his equal and the image of the invisible God.

But while you make the personal glory of Christ the chief object, let the advancement of his kingdom of grace among men be the secondary and subordinate end of your ministry. Christ came into the world to save sinners and you are ordained to promote the same salvation. Endeavour in all your preaching to convince men of sin, to bring them to the faith of Christ and to make them holy, that they may become partakers of that blessed hope and the glory to be revealed.—Make it your study by all means to save perishing sinners and yet aim always at a higher end, to be accepted in your work and then whatever may be the effects of your ministry you will be a sweet savour of Christ unto God.

Make Christ the great subject of your preaching, set forth the dignity of his person in the light of his word as God manifest in the flesh. Unfold his mediatorial office, and endeavour to make your people well acquainted with the design of his gra-

cious undertaking. Exhibit to them all the particulars of his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension and intercession. Explain the gracious characters he bears as the prophet, priest and king of his church. And above all demonstrate the perfect sufficiency of his satisfaction : I urge you to this the more earnestly from the consideration of the loose way of speaking on this subject too common even with those who have been reckoned sound in the faith. You will sometimes hear them exhorting their hearers to do all that they can for themselves and Christ will do the rest. This to say the least of it is directly opposed to scripture doctrine and is a serious injury to the truth as well as to the best interests of men. For the Scriptures assert in terms too plain to admit of any doubt that the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith, is the only but sufficient ground of our acceptance with God, who declares himself well pleased for his righteousness' sake.

But while you assert the perfect sufficiency of Christ's atonement, be careful to urge men to their duty and a strict obedience to the law of God, as the necessary fruit of faith in Christ and the only evidence of a gracious state. With this view, expound the law of God and enforce its observance, and teach men all that Christ hath commanded, stimulating them to diligence by all the powerful motives with which the word of God abounds. In one word, shun not

to declare the whole counsel of God. In your ministerial duties, when you preach in public, when you visit from house to house, and when you enter the chambers of the sick and dying, exhibit Christ as the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation.

In the discharge of public duties, avoid as far as consistent with truth the thorny paths of controversy, which ministers strife rather than godly edifying. Employ your strength and your talents in holding forth the word of life, that all may know the truth ; and whether they will hear or forbear, let them know that they cannot reject it but at the hazard of taking away from the things that are written in the prophecy of this Book. So shall you be clear from the blood of all men.

Duly considering the insufficiency of man for so important a work, in all your difficulties and trials let your dependence be on the promised help of your great Master.— Lay your account with difficulties and tribulations in the world, and be not surprised although you meet with unkindness and ingratitude from those who may now be your warmest friends. These are troubles which would overwhelm you if you had nothing but human dependence to rely on. But if you trust in God, he will strengthen and support you in the hour of temptation. His promise is Lo ! I am with you alway to the end of the

world. Rest on this promise and you will never be disappointed.

In fine, you are now a minister of the New Testament, and set for the defence of the gospel. Consider the unlimited extent of your commission—"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Let this be your warrant for declaring the gospel of the grace of God to all within your reach. But let it be your special and constant care to watch for the souls of those who have chosen you for their pastor. Take heed to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you an overseer, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall Judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word, be instant in season, and out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine—watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." "Neglect not the gift that is in thee."—"Meditate on these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear unto all men." And now may the Lord himself bless your labour—May he establish the work of your hands—May he give you many seals of your ministry, make you a blessing to this people and receive you late

into heaven. Grace be with thee —AMEN.

ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE.

My friends and fellow christians who are members of this congregation—you have before your eyes the Teacher of your own choice who in the good providence of God has been this day ordained to be your pastor. He has been called by you—he has accepted your call and he has been appointed over you according to the rules of God's house. And in him I trust the Lord has given you a pastor after his own heart, to feed you with knowledge and understanding. You have just heard something of the pastoral duties, and much of the utility and comfort of this new relation into which you have entered, is to be expected from a careful discharge of your reciprocal duties. Suffer me now briefly to remind you of some of the duties which belong to you.

The sum of your duty to your pastor, is that you receive him in the Lord. When our Lord sent forth his disciples he said unto them, He that receiveth you receive h me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.— In these few words your duty to your minister is plainly marked out. In receiving him as an ambassador of Christ you receive the Lord Jesus Christ himself, by whom he is sent, and in receiving

Christ you acknowledge the Father who clothed him with his office.

1. This supposes that you should receive him as an ambassador for Christ. You are to consider whom he represents, and in whose name he speaks and to honour him for his Master's sake. Attend to the messages he delivers not as to the words of a man like yourselves, for they are indeed and in truth the words of the living God.

2. It is your duty to attend punctually on his ministrations. If he finds you are careless and indifferent about the things of your peace—it will discourage his heart and it will be most injurious to your own best interests. Besides you must know that it is truly incongruous to call a minister as if desirous to have the gospel preached unto you and then to neglect the appointed opportunities of hearing it. Forget not then the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

3. Receive his testimony, mixing faith with the hearing. Where you meet to hear the word preached give attention to every part of the sermon. There is a portion some where in it for yourselves. Beware of applying the word you hear to others, on the common but absurd principle that it suits them, when in fact it perhaps suits you better than them. Above all, when

you hear the word, do not pretend to entertain doubts about it. If it be the word of God, that is authority enough for believing it. God's authority gives absolute credibility to every word of his, and therefore, every word of God should be received with unshaken confidence, what ever may be your opinion of the preachers talents.

4. Let it be your care to minister to his necessities. He who studies to approve himself in the work of the ministry should not be embarrassed with the things of this world. You ought to attend to this matter with all possible delicacy. You ought not to wait till he complains, for some men will never complain. But if you are not attentive in this manner, worldly cares must intrude themselves into the heart and closet of him who labours for your salvation. In this case it is easy to see your own loss will be incalculable. I have no particular reason to suppose you will fail in this particular of your duty. Nevertheless, I will remind you of the apostle's declaration on this subject, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things!"

5. When reproofs and warnings are necessary receive them with meekness. It is no pleasant task to be the messenger of evil tidings, but, it is justly considered a burthen—some part of the ministerial duty.

When your minister then finds it his duty to do what is painful to his own feelings, you ought not to suspect him of selfish motives. It is on the contrary your duty to look on his reproofs, as the most convincing proof of his love to you, and of the deep interest which he takes in your spiritual welfare. It is therefore your duty to hear them patiently and to study to improve by them.

6. As an excellent means of promoting the comfort of your minister and your mutual benefit, cultivate peace among yourselves. Love while it covers a multitude of sins, makes our duty pleasant as well as profitable. But where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.— Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing and forgiving one another.

7. As the most effectual means of promoting all good amongst you, let me exhort and beseech you to be frequent and fervent in prayer for your pastor and yourselves. God only can make you mutual blessings to one another, therefore look to him who is the Lord of the harvest that he may crown his labours with success. In this way you have reason to expect that in answer to your prayer you will have suitable messages by him and

on all occasions a word in season. In so doing you will have real comfort in one another. Your souls will prosper and be in health, and ye will grow up unto him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Finally. I exhort every one of you, each in his station to labour for the interest of religion and the prosperity of this congregation. Especially the elders who are among you, I exhort to co-operate diligently with your pastor, in promoting the spiritual good of this people. The trust of souls, which is very great is in some measure committed to you also. For the faithful discharge of this trust ye are responsible to God, and no doubt he will call you to account. Study to be ensamples to the flock. Have a conversation in all godliness and honesty, seeking to shew yourselves approved. And all ye who are members of this congregation, see that ye reckon them worthy of all honour and esteem them very highly in love. Strive together for the faith of the gospel; ye have embraced a profession of religion in which ye have come under strong obligation to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered too the saints. Be ye therefore steadfast and unmoveable always abounding in the way and work of

the Lord, for as much as ye know your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

And now brethren, obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy and not with grief, for this is unprofitable for you. May the Lord of heaven and earth before whom you this day stand, bless you and your pastor. May he grant you abundant peace, and send you prosperity. May the spirit be poured out from on high, that he who soweth and ye who reap may rejoice together. Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead, our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever.—AMEN.



From the Edinburgh Ch. Mag.

THOUGHTS ABOUT SEARCHING THE
SCRIPTURES.

Having in a former paper* hinted at some things about searching the Scriptures, I shall suggest the following thoughts, with a humble design to make the Bible better loved and known.

I. When reading the Bible, we should beware of pride of under-

* See No. 1. page 15.

standing. Many wise men and disputers of this world pretend to believe and admire the secrets of nature and Providence, whilst they superciliously reject the glorious mysteries of religion. In every thing around them they meet with the hiding of God's power, and will allow, that "man was not made to question, but adore;" yet in the pride of their minds, will not allow the God of heaven to be wiser than they; will weigh the most tremendous mysteries of Revelation in the scale of depraved reason, and pronounce them wanting! Thus they hold a lamp to divine wisdom, and aid the operations of Omnipotence! But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Let us, in searching the scriptures, not lean on our own understanding, but on the Spirit of God, who will lead into all truth. Let us be open to the truth, and receive with humility what God has deigned to reveal in his word. The most sublime and consolatory truths will be foolishness to us, till a ray from the Sun of Righteousness enlighten our minds in the knowledge of Christ: Then, and never till then, shall we see light in God's light. God did not write to us the great things of his law to be judged at our tribunal, or measured by our narrow grasp. In the Bible he hath spoken the truth, and challenges the belief and reverence, and obedience of the world. Let us not be offended though we meet with many things in scripture hard to be understood. This must be expected in a revelation from God, made about things invisible and future, and made to sinful ignorant men. Let us hum-

bly sit at Christ's feet, and what now appears dark or contradictory, will, in due time, appear clear and consistent. What he saith, as well as what he doeth, we shall know hereafter. We are but children in our views of divine truths. Let us be diligent in the use of means, and in understanding we will be men. Reader of the Bible, be not proud in your own conceit.—Be faithful to the light received, and press forward towards the things that are before. Bless God for what is plain in the scriptures, pray for the Spirit to discover what is hidden, and long for heaven, where that which is perfect will be come, and that which is partial will be for ever done away.

II. When searching the scriptures guard against prejudice and preconceived opinions. Remember that the scripture is the test of our opinions, and not our opinions the test of the scripture. Beware of mistaking the sense of the Spirit, or of palming upon the Bible the figments of your own brain. If your judgment be formed about religion, why do you search the scripture, and pray for the direction of the Spirit of truth?—Do not make the word of God a covert to your errors, or a shelter to your favourite systems. Be willing to rise and fall by this infallible touchstone. Imitate the noble Bereans, who no doubt had entertained many prejudices against Christianity, and against Paul; but by searching the scriptures daily, they found the truth of the one, and fidelity of the other. They made a sacrifice of all their prejudices, and acceded to the truth as it is in Jesus. Go you and do likewise.—Let no names, nor party-prejudices, nor the authority of any man,

preponderate against the force of truth, and the authority of Christ.—Call no man master on earth. Seek to know, obey, and submit to the will of the Lawgiver in the church. Be you like Paul, who thought he should do many things against the name of Jesus, and yet was overcome by the evidence of Christianity, and built the faith he once destroyed. How hard was it for Paul to quit with all his Jewish prejudices against Christ! But great is the truth, and it shall prevail. He conferred not with flesh and blood. He did not enquire at Gamaliel, nor solicit the leave of the Sanhedrim to believe in Jesus, and preach the gospel. Many search the scriptures as the Jews did, (Jer. xlii. 1, 4,) in asking of God the way in which they should walk, and the thing they should do; but were determined to walk in their own way, and go to Egypt, whatever was the answer from God. This was mocking God with a witness! So do many to this very hour.—They build their absurd and blasphemous opinions upon the Bible, and father their errors on the Spirit of God. They search the scriptures, not to become acquainted with the truth in the love of it, but to defend their own nostrums; and thus they wrest the scriptures to their own destruction; and, as Paul did once to the disciples of Jesus, they compel the Bible to blaspheme! But, my friend, be a friend to truth and holiness. Be not biassed in favour of a party, or of your own prepossessions received by tradition from your fathers. Embrace and contend for the truth, whatever be the consequence. *Amicus Plato, Amicus Socrates, sed magis amica veritas.* Whatever God reveals, that believe; whatever he

prohibits, that avoid ; and whatever he commands, that do.

III. Beware of indulging any lust, however great a favourite, when searching the scriptures.—Love to sin will blind your eyes, and tempt you to resist the evidence of divine truth. Men are sanctified by the truth or by the Spirit working by the word. I have hid thy word in my heart, says David, that I sin not against thee ; and I through thy precepts get understanding, therefore I hate every false way. While he increased in knowledge, he increased in holiness. As an old divine phrases it, "There is a communication between the head, the heart, and life of a saint, but not in the hypocrite." A saint holds fast the word of life, and walks in gracious liberty, because he has respect to all God's commandments. No man who loves darkness rather than light, will long and cordially search the scriptures. It is only when men do God's will that they shall savingly know that the doctrine is from him, John vii. 17, 19. To the pure all things are pure, but to the impure nothing is pure : even the holy Bible is made to add fuel to their lusts. The Pharisees were so infected with the lust of applause from men, that they were like the deaf adder to the blessed doctrines of Jesus ; and the Jews, through their lust after a temporal deliverer, continue to resist all the evidences of christianity. The vail is on their eyes when they read Moses. My friend, do not spare any lust, for sooner or later it will war against the soul. It will darken your understanding, defile your heart, and pollute your life. Do not, we beseech you, fortify yourself in sin, by arguments brought from scripture ; this is borrowing a

sword from the royal armoury, in order to thrust it into the heart of the king ! Throw off the works of darkness when putting on the armour of light. You cannot make progress in spiritual knowledge, if you hold fast sin, and refuse to let it go.—Christ and Belial will not have any correspondence together. If you indulge any lust, you will be partial in the application of scripture, will only read what pleases yourself, and by and by the Bible will be neglected altogether. You will not come to the light, lest your deeds be made manifest that they are not wrought by God. Pray to God to make you more and more conformed to his mind in the scripture, and having clean hands, you will wax stronger and stronger.

IV. Guard against a formal spirit when searching the scriptures. It is not easy to read over and over the same truths, and yet preserve the mind from formality. To read the scriptures every day with fresh delight, is a rare attainment. The greatest and best of things are apt to become common, and of consequence to be despised and disregarded. Ministers especially, whose employment and office occasion a frequent perusal of the Bible, are in great danger of falling into this sin. The most tremendous and exhilarating truths, through the force of custom and deceit of the heart, neither alarm nor refresh their spirits. They speak frequently of heaven without delight, and of hell without terror. Unsanctified ministers are generally infidels. Persons being accustomed to hear and read the scriptures from their infancy, are very apt to overlook their divine beauties, and to trifle with their awful mysteries. The truths of revelation pass through

the mind, dwell in the memory, and strike the attention as the veriest trifles. When we hear the doctrine of God's holy word, unless when attended with some human conceit, or dressed in the finery of human oratory, we are apt to sneer, and say, We knew all this before, and what do we care for it! Formality is the very bane of religion. It tends to make our hearts cold as death, and our worship mechanical as the striking of a clock. My friend, beware of formality. When you read the word of God, do it in faith and with the deepest reverence, and this will be an antidote against a careless spirit. Pray for that unction from above, and you will never weary at this blessed work. Do not sport with the deep things of God. Never read about him in the Bible but with increasing fear and affection; and let Jesus be as ointment poured forth to your soul. Never think little of sin, though you have been long accustomed to hear the term mentioned, and let the ways of your God never, never be hard to you; for whatever unbelief and hypocrisy may suggest to the contrary, his commandments are not grievous.—Once more,

Search the scriptures in due order, and in a proper method. Do not read them as if they were a confused jumble, without connection or coherence. They are the words of the God of order. They indeed contain many parts, but all these parts form one beautiful whole. The Bible contains the most ancient and authentic history, the most sublime and interesting doctrines, the most striking discoveries, the holiest laws, the most animating examples, the surest prophecies, and the most comforting

promises. Search into their connection and order. Endeavour to distinguish between the law and the gospel, the precept and the promise, the prediction and its fulfilment. Read them over and over. Do not always read what you call favorite passages, but read the whole, and by reading *three chapters* in a day you will peruse the whole in a year. All the Bible points, as with the finger, to the mystery of redemption through Christ, and deserves our most serious attention. Use all the helps for understanding the scriptures that Providence puts within your reach. Consult commentaries; make use of the margin in your Bible, and attend to the exposition of it by your ministers. Compare one scripture with another. Scripture is the best interpreter of scripture. Comparing spiritual things with spiritual, is a pleasant and profitable employment.—Though there be no real darkness or contradiction in the scripture, yet all things are not revealed in one place, and what is less clear in one place may be elucidated by a parallel passage. The Bereans searched and compared one scripture with another. It is easy to build an absurd doctrine, or system, or practice, upon a detached passage; but when the scripture is consulted as a whole, it falls to the ground. Judge nothing before the time. Truth loves to be seen, but error has many a subterfuge. God's word is a tried word, and has never been found false. Judge of scripture by the analogy of faith, or consent of the whole of it. Remember that the glory of God and the happiness of man are the great themes of the Bible; and whatever tends to eclipse the one and ob-

struct the other, is not a doctrine contained in the sacred volume.

Ye saints of God, bless God for the Bible. Peruse it frequently. Live as those who believe it.—Hide its promises in your hearts against a dying hour; and when you take a farewell of it in this world, you will find a blessed commentary upon it in the heavenly state!

LEUMAS.

From the Edinburgh Ch. Mag.

THE GREAT PHYSICIAN.

Some persons ruin their constitution and shorten their days by the injudicious use of medicines unsuitable to their disease, or unskillfully prepared. But for one person guilty of this folly, thousands may be found who ruin their souls by the total neglect, or the most absurd treatment of their spiritual case. Many, feeling no pain, apprehend no danger, and suffer matters to take their course. Others are occasionally apprehensive of the issue of the disease under which they labour; but either trust to their own supposed skill, or with fatal credulity believe the professions of every bold pretender, and use his prescriptions as an infallible cure. Every quack, indeed, is followed by crowds whom he deceives and murders, while the Great Physician finds few who are persuaded of his skill, or will entrust their souls to his care.

A propensity to neglect, or to employ the most absurd means to cure our spiritual malady, is general amongst diseased mortals; and the consequences of either conduct are fatal, when the error is not discovered and rectified in time. The sinner, deceived by vain hopes, fancies himself almost whole, while

the disease rages within him with more than wonted violence. Or if he be at last undeceived, he discovers to his inexpressible confusion, that after he has spent his all in such attempts, he is nothing bettered, but has rather grown worse.—It interests each of us, therefore, to take warning from the errors of our diseased brethren, to seek the best advice respecting our case, to employ the most approved method of cure, lest we should increase a distemper already alarming, and ruin our souls by ill-advised attempts for our recovery.

Thousands around us apply to the world for a cure. They seem confident of the efficacy of its prescriptions, and not only use them themselves, but recommend them to others. When they feel uneasy from the sharp twinges of a wounded conscience, they fly to the amusements, they intermingle with the society, they immerse themselves in the business of the world; hoping that the diversion of the mind from its spiritual malady, may effect a radical cure. But has it such power? Can company, amusements, or business, indeed cure a diseased soul? It can do *this*: it can ease a sinner of the intolerable burden of reflection; it can deliver him from agonizing apprehensions of the fatal tendency of his disorder. But it can do even this only for a little while. The disease in the mean time is neglected, and grows worse; and he prepares for himself, when the noise and hurry of the world are over, more bitter reflections, acuter pains, and more alarming fears.—Begone, vain world, thou canst be no physician to me: amusements, society, business, miserable comforters are ye all.

Some, and they are reputed wise men, have warmly recommended philosophy, as one whose doctrines are powerful sedatives to the soul, and whose consolations can fortify the sinner against every fear. But the philosophy of the world is often "science falsely so called," and "vain deceit;" and is there not the greatest reason to fear lest those who swallow its boasted antidotes to spiritual distress be thrown into an awful stupor of conscience, from which they shall not awake till they sleep the sleep of death? Has even genuine philosophy ever cured a soul of sin? Ah! no. It cannot probe to the bottom of the sore. If it close the wound, it cannot prevent it from breaking out again, with more alarming symptoms than before. Its precepts are prescriptions which, though followed, cannot rectify what is wrong in the heart, where the seat of the sinner's disorder is fixed. Its doctrines are an ingenious, but ill-supported theory of the method of the cure; the disease of the heart has never yet yielded to medicines prescribed according to this system, nor can they in any case be employed with any prospect of success.

Others, however, despairing of the efficacy of the philosophical mode, have with much zeal recommended the law as the proper resource in every case of extremity; and much declamation has been employed to convince the sinner, that by observing its precepts, he will find speedy relief. But those who have tried this experiment have found that their folly has almost proved their destruction.—The law is much apter to kill than to cure. It prescribes what the sinner finds to be impracticable; and

the rigor of its prescriptions serves rather to irritate than to cure the disease, and either inflames the sinner with rage against the Lawgiver, or drives him to despair.

It is said, however, by the advocates for this method of cure, that the prescriptions of the law are not so rigorous now as they anciently were. Finding that the strictness of the old regimen was too severe, that the constitutions of the patients could not bear it, nor their temper submit to it, nor their former habits permit so great and sudden a change; the law accommodates itself to their case, and by more gentle means performs the cure of the soul with equal success. Repentance for past misconduct, and abstinence in future from gross immorality, are all that it requires; and if to perform these exactly be too much, sincerity of intention and endeavour will be sufficient for restoring the soul to perfect health. But when men prophesy these smooth things, can it be doubted that they prophesy deceit? They may sooth the mind of the patient with the hope of an easy and certain remedy, but the wound will fester within. Sooner or later the commandment will come, sin revive, and the sinner die to all his hopes of recovery by the law; and what will it profit to heal the wound of the sinner thus slightly, and say, Peace, peace, if it be found in the issue that there is no peace?

Yet let it not be said that the case of the sinner is hopeless.—Though the world and its amusements, though philosophy and its consolations; though the law and its precepts have no efficacy to save the soul from death, there is balm in Gilead, which is of sove-

reign efficacy, and a Physician there, by whose wonderful skill it has been prepared, and whose reputation for attention, experience and success, is deservedly great. The case is highly interesting and it deserves our inquiry, whether his ability be equal to his reputation, and whether it be safe for the diseased sinner to entrust his soul to his care.

Many, it must be acknowledged, despise him as a Physician of no value; but of his singular ability we have the amplest attestations, not only from heaven, where he received his commission, but from every individual on earth who ever applied to him for help. Besides, he has been long in practice, and has most extensive experience in the management of the diseases of the soul. From the first entrance of sin into the world to the present time, he has been surrounded by crowds who have flocked to him for relief. The first pair were visited by him on the evening of that day on which they were stung by the old serpent; and he administered to them a cordial in what is called the first promise, which there is reason to believe they took, and which, when taken, had an instantaneous effect in raising their drooping spirits, and produced in due time a perfect cure. Stung Israelites, in every age of the old dispensation, looked to him for help, and whosoever applied to him was made whole. At a subsequent period, he appeared in the world in the habit of a poor man, and went about doing good, curing the spiritual plagues as well as the bodily distempers of all who would employ him. Nor has he ever in latter ages been altogether out of employment, nor ever been reproach-

ed, by any person who has put his case into his hands, with want of compassion or of skill.

Though the seat of the sinner's disorder is uniformly in the heart, it exhibits an almost infinite variety of symptoms. It sometimes breaks out into gross immoralities in the life, and sometimes manifests itself by evil communications proceeding out of the mouth. It sometimes produces stupidity of mind, inflexibility of will, or hardness of heart; inflates the soul with pride, distracts it with vain imaginations, consumes it with envy, or torments it with malice and hatred. It shows itself sometimes by the lusts of the flesh, and sometimes by those of the mind. But this great Physician has experience and skill in the treatment of the universal disease, in all the aspects which it assumes, and in every stage of the disorder. What wonderful cures has he performed in every age! The eyes of the blind have been opened by him, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; he has made the lame man to leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing. To his skill it was owing that Solomon was cured of idolatry, Nebuchadnezzar of pride, and old Manasseh washed from blood. He expelled Satan from the heart of Mary Magdelene, as well as seven devils from her body. He cured Saul of Tarsus of the most inveterate enmity to the name of Christ. He purged the Corinthians from the most abominable impurities of the flesh.

Yet may there not be some cases of so intricate a nature as to baffle his skill, and so obstinate as to resist the efficacy of his medicines? These are no uncommon occurrences in the practice of the ablest physicians. Indeed their

knowledge of the nature of diseases is so limited, they are so imperfectly acquainted with the peculiarities of the constitution of their several patients, and are so ignorant of the manner in which the remedies they prescribe may operate, that they often employ all their art in vain: the disease resists every effort to remove it, and the patients die under their hands.— But a patient never asked advice from the great Physician with whose case he was not perfectly acquainted; for his discernment is so accurate, that he searches the hearts and tries the reins of the children of men. And, though the disease of the sinner, whatever form it assumes, is so malignant that nothing short of the most thorough change of the constitution of the whole soul in all its faculties can effect a radical cure; yet the blood of Jesus, the medicine which he has prepared, when sprinkled on the conscience of the sinner by faith, and by his spirit applied to the heart, proves a remedy of sovereign and never-failing virtue.— Its efficacy failed not, even in the case of those by whose wicked hands it was shed. To this moment it has lost none of its virtue; it can perform every wonderful cure which it ever did. After the experience of many centuries, it may be affirmed, that no case ever miscarried which the great Physician took in hand; that no poor diseased sinner, trusting to him for relief, ever died of his distemper. He gave an earnest of his success in the cure of souls by the invariable success which attended him when he acted as a physician to the bodies of men. All kinds of bodily distempers were then cured by him completely, instantaneously,

by a word, or a touch. There is not one exception on record. It was a proof of his omnipotence, for this only was equal to the cures he performed; and what more can be necessary for restoring to perfect health the soul which is in the most hopeless and desperate state? Can any thing be too hard for the Lord? Or can it be affirmed that ever a sinner applied to him whom he dismissed as incurable? He who needed only to say, I will, be thou whole, has only to speak the word, and the soul which was in the very jaws of death will revive.

Many, indeed, have perished who were within the reach of the Physician of souls; but it must be added, for his credit, never one through his fault. Among the multitude, there is not one who can account for his damnation by saying, I applied to Jesus, but Jesus was unable to save me. They perished, because they disdained to ask his help. They would not come to him that they might have life. On no other principle can their destruction be accounted for; for it is an eternal truth, and ratified by the experience of all who have ever employed him, that “none perish that him trust.”

But this is not all. His ability and success are not greater than his condescension and grace. Let no sinner say, that the great Physician will not deign to attend to his case. His sovereign skill is at the service of all the diseased. His language is, Whosoever will, let him come, and I will heal him. What is still more delightful, he discovers equal compassion, and pays equal attention, to the poor and to the rich. He neglects no poor man's case because he is poor. It must be acknowledged that he is much

employed; would to God that he were more: but the multitude of applications made to him neither occupies his time, nor distracts his mind so as to make it difficult for any poor diseased creature to find admission into his presence, or have the necessary attention paid to his case. He has leisure to listen to every petitioner, to examine into every case, and to apply the proper remedy: Besides, his hours of attendance are not circumscribed, nor does he deem it an impertinent intrusion to approach him at any hour. The kindest of his servants are not half so condescending and compassionate as he himself is; for though they have been known to throw discouragements in the way, he never disdains to lend a gracious ear. Though a blind Bartimeus was considered by many of them, as unseasonably intruding, yet the great Master despised not his prayer; and, forbid the sinner who will, he still continues to make him welcome. For though he is surrounded, in the place where he now resides, by a crowd of admirers, who listen continually to his conversation, and celebrate his skill in their songs of gratitude, yet he waits that he may be gracious, and is exalted, that he may have mercy on the meanest and most wretched.

It deserves farther to be remarked, that the great Physician performs his cures gratuitously. Inability to bear the expense, it is well known, deters many from employing those who are most celebrated for their skill; the narrowness of their circumstances obliges them to satisfy themselves with persons of inferior reputation. But the diseased sinner has no discouragement from this quarter. Christ is truly the poor man's physician.—He asks, he takes no fee. He is

rich, and needs nothing; he is generous, and will accept of nothing. A greater affront cannot be put on him than to offer him any consideration to induce him to pay attention to our case; and he who presumes to offer any thing of this kind has reason to tremble, lest the insult should be resented with such a repulse as that wretched man Simon Magus anciently received, *Thy money perish with thee*, because thou thinkest that the gift of God may be purchased with money. It is the good of men, and not his own emolument, that he seeks; and he seeks it, by dispensing to them freely and liberally those blessings which he has to bestow. What indeed has the sinner to give? Is he not a very Lazarus, not only covered with sores, but moreover in rags and wretchedness? Is he not a poor prodigal, who, having spent his all in riotous living, reaps as the fruit of his folly, disease and want? And shall such a creature talk of paying for his cure? Were the great Physician to stand upon terms, the sinner must perish; for he has nothing but what is worthless and vile, nothing which the Saviour would deign to receive. All that Jesus demands is the gratitude of those whose iniquities he pardons, and whose diseases he heals; for the cure itself he will have nothing. "Without money and without price" is the label affixed to all his prescriptions.

What a great and kind Physician! Is it not our comfort that we have heard of him; our duty, our interest to employ him? Shall we suffer ourselves to be any longer deluded by those deceivers who expose to ridicule the old Christian method of putting our case into Jesus's hand, and implicitly follow-

ing the prescriptions of his word ? No ; let us spurn them from us, saying ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value ; and turn to Jesus, saying, To whom shall we go but unto thee ? thou hast the words of eternal life.— There is not indeed salvation in another. Applying to others, we must in every instance be disappointed ; applying to Jesus, never. Whatever Jesus has not prescribed is not medicine, but poison to the soul. Its deleterious properties may not be discovered by the infatuated creature, while he is swallowing the sweet but noxious draught ; but it will be found to be bitter in the belly ; it will make our spiritual wounds fester like a gangrene, and, unless we hasten ere it be too late to the great Physician, occasion the bitterness of eternal death. But the balm of Gilead, which he has prepared and administers, has virtues peculiar to itself ; for it grew on the Plant of Renown, the very leaves of which are for the healing of the nations ; and has never been applied without the most astonishing and lasting benefit. Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed. ÆGROTUS.

From the Columbian Star.

*"A good man seen, though silent,
counsel gives."*

Moral excellence possesses a dignity which is revered, even by those who are not influenced by its principles, and, on this account, we need not wonder that every one is desirous of being esteemed virtuous by others. Wicked men are sometimes capable of advancing very judicious moral sentiments ; but it will be found less difficult for every class of persons to re-

commend genuine goodness by their words, than by the general deportment of their lives. The discrepancy which is observable between what people approve, and what they practice, springs from a defect which lies deep in the human constitution, and no adequate correction can be applied but such as the Gospel furnishes.

We have no criterion so safe and proper, by which to Judge of the real disposition of a man's heart, as that which is afforded us by the tenor of his actions. In vain may he speak to others of the excellencies of religion, when he does not display its transforming power, by a well ordered life ; they will not believe he has received the truth in the love of it, when he lives contrary to its dictates. Although the utmost caution is necessary on the part of every description of individuals, in order to avoid censure and reproach, yet in none is it more so, than in the professed followers of Christ. The prominent character which they sustain, draws the eyes of all towards them. Being truly "the light of the world," although mankind are unwilling to acknowledge them as such, they are rendered conspicuous.

Even those men of this world, who are not in the habit of construing the faults of Christians with malicious intentions, will make an improper use of them, for the purpose of sanctioning their own irregularities. And furthermore, Christians themselves copy after each other, and an erroneous course pursued by one, is often the cause of many offences among his brethren. "The lives of Christians," says a writer, "are books which all men read." They are brought under the most rigorous scrutiny ; and

the least delinquency seldom escapes observation.

The great object of the saints should be to display such a character as will tend to win men to Christ. Were this kept constantly in view, they would be more careful to lead irreproachable lives, and to manifest to others, that according to their solemn declarations, they are not of this world. But how can so laudable a purpose be accomplished? Not, surely, by pursuing the round of fashionable pleasures: not by joining with the wicked in vain conversation.

So great a resemblance in these respects do we often witness in the conduct of Christ's professed disciples, and of the devotees of Satan, that we cannot tell where to draw the line of distinction. They go on in such harmony, that we might suppose them to be animated by the same principles, and to have set before them the same prospects of reward. But a correct and amiable deportment, one which is uniformly guided by the precepts of the Bible none can despise; for when true goodness appears in its majesty and loveliness, it proves an admonisher of evil doers, and commends itself to the consciences of gainsayers as an invaluable possession. A holy life speaks more than volumes in praise of vital godliness; its voice is more powerful than the most noisy declamation. These reflections cannot be passed over lightly by any Christian who considers the efficacy of a good example to deter from crime and to excite to virtue. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."—

The Apostle Peter addresses us in this language: "For so is the will of God, that, with well doing, ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." DION.



From the Christian Monitor.

PSALM XLII.

The author of this elegant complaint, exiled from the temple, and from the public exercises of his religion, to the extreme parts of Judea, persecuted by his numerous enemies, and agitated by their reproaches, pours forth his soul to God in this tender and pathetic composition. The ardent feelings of a devout heart are admirably expressed, while the memory of former felicity seems to aggravate his present anguish. The following paraphrase, though infinitely short of the original in sublimity, will perhaps serve to evince the correspondence of the subject and sentiments of this Poem, with the elegiac productions of modern times.

BISHOP LOWTH.

As pants the wearied heart for cooling springs,
That sinks exhausted in the summer's chase;
So pants my soul for Thee, great King of Kings!
So thirsts to reach thy sacred resting-place.
On briny tears* my famished soul has fed,
While taunting foes deride my deep despair;

* It seems odd to an English reader to represent *tears* as *meat* or *food*; but we should remember, that the sustenance of the ancient Hebrews consisted for the most part of liquids, such as *broths*, *potages*, &c.

" Say, where is now thy great deliverer
fled ?

Thy mighty God—deserted wanderer
where ?"

Oft dwell my thoughts on those thrice
happy days,

When to thy fane I led the jocund
throng ;

Our mirth was worship, all our pleasure
praise,

And festal joys still closed with sacred
song,

Why throb, my heart ? Why sink my
sadd'ning soul ?

Why droop to earth with various woes
oppress'd ?

My years shall yet in blissful circles roll,
And joy be yet an inmate of this breast.

By Jordan's bank with devious steps I
stray,

O'er Hermon's rugged rocks, and des-
erts drear ;

E'en there thy hand shall guide my lone-
ly way,

There thy remembrance shall my spir-
it cheer.

In rapid floods the vernal torrents roll,
Harsh sounding cataracts responsive
roar :

Thrice angry billows overwhelm my soul,
And dash my shatter'd bark from shore
to shore.

Yet thy soft mercies, ever in my sight,
My heart shall gladden through the
tedious day :

And midst the dark and gloomy shades
of night,

To the I'll fondly tune the grateful lay.

Rock of my hope ! great solace of my
heart !

Why, why desert the offspring of thy
care,

While taunting foes thus point th' invid-
ious dart ?

" Where's now thy God ! abandon'd
wanderer where ?"

Why faint my soul ! Why doubt Jeho-
vah's aid ?

Thy God, the God of Mercy still shall
prove !

In his bright fane thy thanks shall yet be
paid ;

Unquestion'd be his pity and his love !*

* This Poem seems to have been com-
posed by David, when he was expelled
from his kingdom by his rebellious son,
and compelled to fly to the borders of
Lebanon, as it is plain he did, from
2 Samuel xvii. 27. Undoubtedly, who-
ever composed this Psalm was expelled
from the sacred city, and wandered as an
exile in the regions of Hermon, and the
heights of Lebanon, whence Jordan is
fed by the melting of the perpetual snow,
verse 7. Let it be remembered, by the
way, that David never betook himself to
these places when he fled from Saul, but
concealed himself in the interior parts of
Judea. Here then he pitched his camp,
protected by the surrounding mountains
and woods, and hither the veteran sol-
diers, attached personally to him, and ad-
verse to change, resorted from every
part of Palestine. Here also, indulging
his melancholy, the prospects and the
objects about him, suggested many of
the ideas in this poem. Observing the
deer which constantly came from the
distant vallies to the fountains of Leba-
non, and comparing this circumstance
with his earnest desire to revisit the tem-
ple of God, and perhaps elevating his
thought to a higher, celestial temple, he
commences his poem :

" As the hart panteth after the water
brooks,

" So panteth my soul after thee, Oh ! God.

" My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God ;
 " When shall I enter, and appear before God ! "

That is, enter into the temple, from which I am now an exile. He adds a bitterer cause of grief than his exile, namely, the reproaches of the multitude, and the cruel taunt that he is deserted of his God, and that the Deity of whom he had boasted, fails to appear to his assistance, than which nothing can be more grating to an honest mind, and a mind conscious of its piety.—Compare 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8.

" My tears have been my sustenance,
 " By day and by night,
 " While they continually say unto me,
 " Where is now thy God ? "

The repetition of the name of God raises in him fresh uneasiness, and causes all his wounds to bleed again ; this forces him to exclaim : " I remember God, and I dissolve in tears : when I went with the multitude to the temple of God, with the voice of joy and gladness, with the multitude leaping for joy."

He now restrains his tears :

" Why art thou so cast down, O my soul ?
 " And why art thou so disquieted with me ?
 " Hope thou in God, for I still shall praise him."

He again breaks forth into lamentations, with which he elegantly intermingles a poetical description of Lebanon. There are upon those hills frequent cataracts, and in the spring season, the rivulets are uncommonly turbid by the melting of the snow ;

" Deep calleth unto deep at the voice of thy cataracts !

" And all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me."

These form the principal imagery of the Poem, and I omit the rest, lest I should fatigue the reader by the minuteness of criticism, which is both useless and impertinent, when the subject wants no illustration.

PROF. MICHELLS.

From Robert Hall's Sermon's.

DIGNITY OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

If the dignity of an employment is to be estimated, not by the glitter of external appearances, but by the magnitude and duration of the consequences involved in its success, the ministerial function is an high and honourable one.—Though it is not permitted us to magnify ourselves, we may be allowed to magnify our office ; and, indeed, the juster the apprehensions we entertain of what belongs to it, the deeper the conviction we feel of our defects. Independently of every other consideration, that office cannot be mean which the Son of God condescended to sustain : for *The word which we preach first began to be spoken by the Lord ;* and, while he sojourned upon earth, the Prince of life was chiefly employed in publishing his own religion. That office cannot be mean, whose end is the recovery of man to his original purity and happiness—the illumination of the understanding—the communication of truth—and the production of principles which will bring forth fruit unto everlasting life. As the material part of the creation was formed for the sake of the immaterial ; and of the latter the most momentous characteristic is its moral and

accountable nature, or, in other words, its capacity of virtue and vice; that labour cannot want dignity, which is exerted in improving man in his highest character, and fitting him for his eternal destination. Here alone is certainty and durability: for, however highly we may esteem the arts and sciences, which polish our species, and promote the welfare of society; whatever reverence we may feel, and ought to feel, for those laws and institutions whence it derives the security necessary for enabling it to enlarge its resources and develop its energies, we cannot forget that these are but the embellishments of a scene we must shortly quit—the decorations of a theatre, from which the eager spectators and applauded actors must soon retire. *The end of all things is at hand.* Vanity is inscribed on every earthly pursuit, on all sublunary labour; its materials, its instruments, and its objects, will alike perish. An incurable taint of mortality has seized upon, and will consume them ere long. The acquisitions derived from religion, the graces of a renovated mind, are alone permanent. This, is the mystic enclosure, rescued from the empire of change and death; this is the field which the Lord has blessed; and this word of the kingdom, the seed which alone produces immortal fruit, the very bread of life, with which, under a high economy, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, will feed his flock and replenish his elect, through eternal ages. How high and awful a function is that which proposes to establish in the soul an interior dominion—to illuminate its powers by a celestial light—and introduce it to an intimate, ineffable, and unchanging al-

liance with the Father of Spirits. What an honour to be employed as the instrument of conducting that mysterious process by which men are born of God; to expel from the heart the venom of the old serpent; to purge the conscience from invisible stains of guilt; to release the passions from the bondage of corruption, and invite them to soar aloft into the regions of uncreated light and beauty; *to say to the prisoners go forth, to them that are in darkness, shew yourselves!* These are the fruits which arise from the successful discharge of the Christian ministry; these are the effects of the gospel, wherever it becomes the power of God unto salvation: and the interests which they create, the joys which they diffuse, are felt in other worlds.

In insisting on the dignity attached to the ministerial office, it is far from my intention to supply fuel to vanity, or suggest such ideas of yourself as shall tempt you to lord it over God's heritage. Let the importance of your station be rather felt and acknowledged in its beneficial results, than ostentatiously displayed; and the consciousness of it, instead of being suffered to evaporate in authoritative airs and pompous pretensions, produce a concentration of your powers. If the great Apostle was content to be a helper of the joy, without claiming dominion over the faith of his converts, how far should we be from advancing such a claim. If he served the Lord with humility and many tears; if he appeared among the churches which he planted, in fear, and in weakness, and with much trembling, we may learn how possible it is to combine, with true dignity, the most unassuming deportment, and the deepest con-

fiction of our weakness and unworthiness, with a vigorous discharge of whatever belongs to the apostolic, much more to the pastoral office. The proper use to be made of such considerations as have now been suggested is, *to stir up the gift which is in us*, to apply ourselves to our work with becoming resolution, and anticipate, in dependance on the divine blessing, important effects. The moment we permit ourselves to think lightly of the Christian ministry, our right arm is withered; nothing but imbecility and relaxation remains. For no man ever excelled in a profession to which he did not feel an attachment bordering on enthusiasm;—though what in other professions is enthusiasm, is, in ours, the dictate of sobriety and truth.

REVIVALS.

It is difficult to arrive at any certainty respecting those revivals of religion, as they are termed, which the religious papers represent to have taken place in different parts of the country. For it appears to us, that sufficient care is not taken to ascertain the *reality* of revivals, by those who report them to the world. It frequently happens, when the word of God is faithfully applied to the consciences of sinners, that, through the common operations of the Holy Spirit, and the *workings of a natural conscience*, a temporary conviction of sin and guilt is produced; terrors are excited in the mind, and the cry is *what shall we*

do to be saved, saved, however, not so much from sin as from its alarming consequences? Some text is then suggested to the mind, which is eagerly embraced as the ground of hope and joy; the next thing is visibly to be added to the church, and for a time all is well; but the understanding being all this time unenlightened as it respects gospel doctrines, gospel motives, and gospel practice, and being themselves secretly slaves to their lusts and corrupt propensities, they are really nothing more or less than *the stony ground hearers in the parable*—*it happens unto them according to the true proverb, the dog has returned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.*—Yet, many in their zeal to be the bearers of good news, without proper examination, and without waiting a sufficient time to prove the *genuineness* of the work, represent such persons to the world, as true converts to the religion of Jesus.

We have once witnessed more than eighty persons make a public profession of their faith in the Saviour at one time, and in less than two years from that time, we have seen many of them prove to be mere carnal professors, polluting by their abominations the church and ordinances of God. We do not assert that this always happens, for we believe otherwise, but that

such is often the case, we are confident to affirm.

But if the gospel be really making such rapid progress among us, we inquire, where are the fruits of it to be found? Is heresy becoming less common? Is practical godliness increasing? It is to be feared, that these important questions cannot be answered in the affirmative; if so, how account for the acts passed, and the language held, by our highest church Judicatories, within whose bounds those revivals have been most common? "The Reformed Dutch Church," says the Evangelical Witness, "at the late sessions of its General Synod has condemned, by act, the Hopkinsian errors, and those pamphlets, written by some of its members advocating them."

And, says the General Assembly's Narrative of the state of Religion within their bounds,—“From almost every direction, we learn that the Lord's day is most shamefully profaned, and that even professors sanction this destructive and most offensive sin by the looseness of their example, or their open conformity to the world, in some of the most popular modes by which its sanctity is invaded. Even ministers, in some instances, have been known to travel in public conveyances on this “day of rest.” The Assembly have learned this fact with pain; and while they deplore, they wholly disapprove it.”

The Convention of Congregational ministers of Massachusetts, at their meeting in May last, also, lament the profanation of the sabbath, and passed a resolution to “inculcate its better observance in future.”

With these proofs before us, have we not reason to fear, that, notwithstanding all the noise which is made about Revivals, that religion is *really on the decline*.

Mankind are continually prone to prophecy to themselves smooth things; this often prevents them from discerning their true condition, and leads them to boast of their attainments, while they have the greatest cause for mourning and humility. Let us not be puffed up, but let us take heed to the words spoken to us by the Great Head of the church. *Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*

The following remarks from the Western Recorder, which express our own reasons for not more frequently noticing Revivals, shall conclude what we have to offer at present on this subject.

“The late Religious Newspapers contain several notices of Revivals: but after having examined them, we choose not to mark them for insertion. In some instances, the numbers are *small: but more*

are expected—in other instances, there are only *favourable appearances, or hopes entertained of ensuing Revivals*: and not unfrequently, we are presented with *late accounts* of Revivals, the existence of which, have again and again been mentioned with little variety of detail. This doubtless pro-

ceeds in some measure, from a sincere desire for the success of the gospel, as well as from a laudable wish to gratify the feelings of patrons: Yet ought we not to guard against creating misapprehension? If there be any subject respecting which we are to state facts with the utmost care and precision, it is this."

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

American Society for Meliorating the condition of the Jews.

We have been highly gratified by a perusal of the second annual Report of the Board of Managers of this Society. The Jews have a claim upon Christians which can be urged by no other nation on the globe; for "unto them were committed the Oracles of God: and from them, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is God over all blessed for ever." We learn from this report, that the most favourable indications to co-operate in this cause, are daily appearing among both Jews and Christians in different parts of Europe. It is contended by the advocates of this Society, that the conversion of the world, and the commencement of the Millenium, will begin with the Jews; a sentiment which we do not feel disposed to controvert.

There has been received into the Treasury, during the past year,

the sum of D7668 25 cents; the expenditures of the year amount to D3975 30 cents; there is now in the Treasury a balance of D7,386 42 cents. The Board announces 213 Auxiliaries.

We have only room for one extract.

"We owe them [the Jews] too, *reparation for the wrongs they have received at the hands of Christians.* All the Christian nations of the old world are deep in the guilt of persecuting the Jews; and for this they need national expiation. The histories of Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and England present, century after century, nothing but a tissue of expulsions, of oppression, and of massacres of that hapless race. And although it must be conceded, that the finger of God is seen in these sufferings, pointing to their great and unrepented transgression in rejecting and crucifying their Messiah, yet this forms no excuse for those who have added to their afflictions, and rejoiced in the evils which have befallen them.— So far from this, that God has manifested his displeasure towards all

the oppressors of Israel. "I have learned," said Frederick King of Prussia, that determined enemy of all religions, "I have learned, by the experience of ages, that no man ever touched that people, but he smarted for it;" a remark, which the voice of inspiration, as well as the experience of mankind has abundantly confirmed. Thus saith the Lord, "I will contend with him that contendeth with thee; I will feed them that oppress thee, with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine; and all flesh shall know, that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer." And with this prophetic menace before us, let us ask, what has been done to the nations which have afflicted Israel? Where is the crown of Pharaoh who enslaved them, of Nebuchadnezzar who carried them away captive, and of Vespasian, who sacked and burned their Holy City? Has not "Egypt become the basest of kingdoms?" Has not Babylon been swept with the besom of destruction? and proud imperial Rome been subverted and desolated by the Goths and Vandals? And there is no doubt, that in the controversy which the Lord has had with modern nations, the *oppressions and the blood of Israel* have been had in remembrance; that the *God of Israel*, has rode in that whirlwind, and directed that storm, which has spread so much desolation over the continent of Europe and the British Isles! It becomes those nations therefore, to testify against the sin of their forefathers, and to endeavour to repair the evils they have committed against the Jewish nation.—We would fondly hope, that what is now doing by the British nation

for the people scattered and peeled[‡] will be some national expiation for the wrongs inflicted by their Edward,* their Henry,[†] and their Richard;[‡] and that the nearly *Fifty thousand dollars* which the London Society report, as having been contributed to their funds during the past year, for promoting Christianity among the Jews, will present a memorial before God, which will arrest some of His descending judgments.§ And while we as fondly hope, that our severance from that nation, has cut off the entail of punishment upon us for their national sins; still we would remember that there are sins of omission as well as commission, and would not consider ourselves innocent, unless in this matter, we also come to the help of the Lord. By the hope then of averting the curse, and inheriting the blessing, let the *American people* sympathise with, and endeavour to assist the Jews, in their emancipation from the intolerance of the old world, and the moral debasement of unbelief in Jesus Christ. And let the *American Society* endeavour to restore them to their political rights—to those virtues and talents, which generally follow in the train of liberty; and especially to those

* The First.

† The Third.

‡ The First.

§ The idea of arresting the judgments of God, by a donation of "Fifty thousand dollars," is one which we did not anticipate from a *Protestant*. We must therefore, regard it as a slip of the pen; for we think the good sense of the writer of the report, would, upon reflection, lead him to discover the manifest evil of so erroneous a sentiment as that of representing Christian benevolence, or any other species of good works, as expiatory in their nature.

EDT. REL. MON.

privileges and hopes, which are connected with the saving influence of the gospel of the grace of God, our Saviour."



TRUE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH.

A General Synod under the above title, was organized at Hackensack in June last, by a number of Ministers and Congregations, who have withdrawn themselves from the communion of the Reformed Dutch Church. It appears from their minutes, that the Synod consists of 2 Classes—16 Churches—10 Ministers—2 Candidates—1 Catechist. Notwithstanding it will occupy several of our pages, we have thought proper to copy the greater part of their Manifesto, which embraces their reasons for the separation—and leave it for our readers to judge for themselves, whether or not, they are of sufficient weight to justify the measure which they have adopted. But while this subject is before us, we cannot forbear expressing our conviction, that the species of *liberality* or *Christian charity*, falsely so called, which has obtained to an unparalleled extent at the present day; which has for its ostensible object, the augmentation of the visible church, with but little regard to a correct knowledge of scripture doctrine, and which makes the Apostolic injunction, "earnestly contend for the faith," of secondary importance, is overrunning the Churches of America with heretical principles and degenerate practices.

This modern *charity*, which seeks to form an **EXTERNAL** union, an union destitute of heart and soul, among the professed friends of the Redeemer, and to collect into one fold, a heterogeneous mass of principles and prejudices, will only add to the catalogue of jarring sects which already divide and distract the Christian church. Such an union is des-

titute of reason and has no foundation in the word of God. Every communion must have some standard, by which to test its members; and when any of its members *refuse*, or neglect to conform to such standard, or teach any new doctrine, on the ground that it is a "*minor point*," a mere "*shade of difference*," they at once destroy the union of the church, and sever the bonds of Christian fellowship. We know of no union but an union of **SENTIMENT**; for the Church of Christ is one, and in it, must be found order, and not confusion.—"Be ye of one mind," says an Apostle. Where, therefore, persons are of a very different mind on important points of gospel Revelation, is it not wise, scriptural and consistent with the principles of Christian charity, to separate, and as many as are found of "one mind," to associate themselves together in a distinct communion?

"When a Church once noted for its soundness in the faith, becomes corrupt in its principles and practice, the faithful among them, both clergy and laity, should not be precipitate in meditating a secession, but, with patience and zeal, apply every advisable measure to effect, if possible, a reformation. Yet, when it appears that every effort proves ineffectual, and that the flood-gates of error are opened too wide ever again to be closed by ordinary means, the peace of the Church is no longer to be maintained at the expense of truth and good government; it then becomes their indispensable duty, in imitation of the example of our forefathers, to avail themselves of the last and only resort, which is to retrograde and assume their original character. That such is the state of what is now styled the Dutch Reformed Church in America, will

fully appear upon due examination. And here we notice in the first place, what is taught in the Confession of Faith, and Heidlebergh Catechism. Confession of Faith, Art. 29th, it is said that the body and communion of the true Church must be distinguished from all sects who call themselves the Church; and that the marks by which the true church is known, are these: First, If the pure doctrine of the Gospel is preached therein. Secondly, If she maintain the pure administration of the sacraments, as instituted by Christ. Thirdly, If Church discipline is exercised in punishing of sin. In short, if all things are managed according to the pure word of God; all things contrary thereto rejected, and Jesus Christ acknowledged as the only head of the church. Hence the true Church may certainly be known, from which no man has a right to separate himself."

"Heidlebergh Catechism, Lord's day, 21, It is asked: "What believest thou concerning the Holy Catholic Church of Christ?" The answer is: "That the Son of God, from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends, and preserves to himself, by his spirit and word, out of the whole human race, a Church chosen to everlasting life, agreeing in true faith."—This we believe to be perfectly agreeable to the word of God."

"In the first place, then, for a body to afford the evidence that they are the true Church, the mere name and profession of it will not suffice, whatever show of sanctity and parade in ordinances may attend it. It must be found, that they maintain purity of doctrine, and agree in the true faith. For the Church, as taught in the inspired

volume, is built upon the foundation of the prophets and Apostles, i. e. the doctrines of truth taught by them, "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." All the members of Christ's body, the Church, are saved through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth, and so have the same common faith, and in this are of the same mind. "There is one body, and one spirit; one hope; one Lord; one faith; one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all." Eph. iv. 4, 6.

"Secondly. For a body to afford the evidence of their being the true Church, it must be found that they maintain the pure administration of the sacraments, as instituted by Christ. Of the nature of the sacraments, and who are the proper subjects of them, and accordingly, to whom they are to be administered, we are instructed in the Heidlebergh Catechism, Lord's days, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.—Also in the Confession of faith, Art. 33, 34, 35, where it is taught that the sacraments are holy and visible signs and seals instituted and appointed of God; (not to make us Christians or believers) for this it is said. Lord's day 25th, ques. 65, "the Holy Ghost works in the heart by the preaching of the Gospel," but for the confirmation and strengthening of faith, of which grace they are visible signs and seals." "More particularly—

1st. In respect to Baptism, we are taught that it belongs to believers and their children, and to be administered to adults who manifest true faith, and to the children of such, and none others. This is also abundantly plain, from the forms appointed, for the

administration of Baptism, and from the whole word of God."

"Secondly. In respect to the Lord's Supper, we are taught, that that also is an ordinance appointed for the use and benefit of believers exclusively; accordingly it is asked, 30th Lord's day, ques. 81, For whom is the Lords Supper instituted? The answer is, for those who are truly sorrowful for their sins, and yet trust that these are forgiven them for the sake of Christ, and who earnestly desire to have their faith more strengthened and their lives more holy. But hypocrites, and such as turn not to God with sincere hearts, eat and drink judgment to themselves.—Ques. 82, Are they also to be admitted to this Supper, who by their confession and lives declare themselves infidels and ungodly? According to the Compendium, part 2d, ques. 62, May those be admitted to the Lord's Supper who teach false doctrine or lead offensive lives? Ans. No! Lest the covenant of God be profaned, and his wrath kindled against the whole church. Therefore it is the duty of the Christian church, according to the appointment of Christ, to exclude such persons from the kingdom of heaven, untill they show amendment of life." "And

Thirdly. As respects the exercise of discipline for false doctrine or offensive lives, by administering reproofs, in case of obstinacy, after proper reproofs have been given, by excommunication. The necessity of this is taught, Lord's day 31, and Confession of Faith, Art. 33, and it is so intimately connected with the proper administration of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the preservation of the church from

entire corruption in doctrine and practice, as to preclude the necessity of any proof."

"Such, then, as have been now noticed, are the marks by which the Church is to be known and distinguished from those bodies that falsely arrogate to themselves the name of Church. A serious attention to the state of that body, called the Reformed Dutch Church, as it now exists, and comparing it with these marks, will discover a departure of that body from its adopted standards."

"The Church must be pure and undefiled, at least as to doctrine; for God will not be mocked, and will judge of her by her own confession. It is plain to those who have true discernment, and know how to judge of things according to the testimony of God's word, that the Lord has had a controversy, and has been displeased with that body for many years. To begin with the discipline of the Church. How little, alas! of the exercise of this is known and practised in this connection! with a few exceptions, an almost universal and entire laxness prevails, with an outward garb of the sacred name of christian. and a profession of the holy name of the blessed Jesus. We behold members every where in the congregations of that body, living in utter ignorance even of the first principles of all true religion, and so without the love and fear of the true God: and as they are grossly ignorant, so too we behold them profane and ungodly in their lives, having no respect for the honour of God's holy name, his laws, word, and worship; and under these circumstances, without the exercise of discipline, admitted to the use of sealing ordi-

nances. Again—As for the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, instead of being administered agreeable to the institution and appointment of Christ, do we not find in most congregations a prevailing prostitution of these ordinances, by an almost indiscriminate administration of them, without any regard to qualification. Is it not a notorious fact, that parents are admitted to present their children for baptism, without manifestation of any true knowledge of the nature of that ordinance, and thus, without any evidence of faith and piety, or even of morality, yea, often such as are grossly wicked?"

"And in regard to the administration of the Lord's Supper, we find that most of the Churches are composed of members, the most of whom are so far from manifesting evidences of true faith and piety, that when the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, as taught in the standards of their church, and for which they pride themselves, are brought in question, they appear not only ignorant of, but even the avowed enemies thereto. It is truly awful to behold whole churches, with perhaps a few solitary exceptions, composed of ignorant, prayerless, wicked baptized members; and not only so, but many also of this character recognised as members in full communion. And what has been the treatment of both ministers and elders, and lay members, who have endeavoured to be faithful in reforming the church from this wide-spreading evil? Have they not, in many instances, been hated, derided, and persecuted? Have they not been branded with the name of Antinomians, Schismatics, trouble-makers of Israel, inventors of new

things, and had all manner of evil spoken of them falsely? Have not such ministers been despitely used, driven away, or starved? and are not those ministers who please the ignorant, the vulgar, and the wicked, by giving them the children's bread, held in popular esteem and well provided for? Out of the body of members of the church thus composed, originate the consistories, who, together with the ministers, have the immediate care and government of the churches over which they are placed. To constitute Classes and Synods, every delegated minister has an elder attending him; and thus the judicatories of the church are made up, for the most part, of ignorant and impious men, who have not the fear of God before their eyes."

Here they complain that the church Judicatories have licensed for the ministry, numbers "who, when the real interest of the church, the maintainance of purity of doctrine, and the discipline of the church are brought in question, declare themselves on the side of error."—Then follows a minute statement of the case of Mr. Ten Eick, with which most of our readers are doubtless familiar.

"That the state of the church is such as before described, will farther appear from the acts and proceedings of her higher, and many of her lower judicatories for many years past; which violations of truth and order, the church at large has sanctioned and approved by her constant acquiescence, and thus evinced that she has drank deeply of the fountain of heresy. The following are stubborn facts: they have approved a call subscribed by the minority of a consistory,

with the seal of a corporation affixed to it, without an order from the body politic.

They have admitted an elder to a seat and voice in Particular Synod who was not delegated by any classis, and for the purpose of securing a majority on an appeal relative to said call: and on remonstrating against the unconstitutionality of their proceeding by the appellant, the reply was, where we can find no bridge, we must leap over the ditch!

They have formed a congregation within a congregation at Hackensack, and another at Schraalenburgh.

They have declared a Minister, as an individual, responsible for acts done by his consistory.

They have not only left Mr. C. Ten Eick in good standing, who, as noticed before, had from the press published and circulated Arminian doctrine, upon his giving ambiguous and equivocal answers to a few questions, but now suffer him to explain those answers, in such a manner as to make them appear to accord with the doctrines he had published.

They have refused, when earnestly solicited, to call to account ministers who had under their signatures declared their approbation of the publication above mentioned.

They have restored to office a minister who had been suspended for intemperance, barely upon his presenting in writing a very slight confession, not even mentioning the crime for which he had been suspended, amounting to nothing more than what every Christian would be willing to confess daily.

They have, by tolerating and countenancing men in the commu-

nion and ministry of the church who advocate the doctrine of indefinite atonement and natural ability, and by conniving at the prevailing opinion, that those errors are of little moment, suffered the church to be overrun with Hopkinsian errors; errors that have always proved to be a pernicious germ of apostacy whenever churches have relapsed into heresy.

They have rejected a motion for calling a general convention for the purpose of defining and explaining the doctrine of the Reformed Dutch Church relative to the atonement; and contrary to all legal proceedings, as if wishing to conceal the motion from the public, refused to record it on their minutes.

They have deposed ministers for no other crime but that they could not in conscience associate with men who advocate Hopkinsian errors. To all which may be added that Methodist ministers are allowed to preach in the pulpits of Reformed Dutch Churches, and persons of the Methodist persuasion are, by ministers of the Dutch Church, invited to the communion table, and the ordinance of the Lord's Supper actually administered to them.

WE, the undersigned, Ministers, Elders, and Deacons, finding our patience exhausted, and viewing with the most sensible regret the prevalence of the errors, offences, and irregularities above stated, and that all practicable endeavours to remove them have been frustrated; considering also, with the most solemn impression on our minds that when we entered on our sacred offices respectively, we have sworn to maintain and defend the doctrine and discipline of the Reformed Dutch Church at every hazard,

have unanimously agreed to restore the Church to its original purity, and, together with the congregations under our care, do unite in declaring ourselves the *True Reformed Dutch Church* in the United States of America; and as a rule of our faith and practice, do abide by all the standards ratified and established in the National Synod, held at Dortrecht in the years 1618 and 1619, without the least alteration, viz. The Word of God as the Supreme Law. The Netherland Confession of Faith. The Canons. The Liturgy. The Heidebergh Catechism, and the rules of church government; by which act, we do not *separate* from, but remain the identical Reformed Dutch Church.

For the justice and propriety of our conduct, and the purity of our motives and intentions, we appeal to the Great Head of the Church and searcher of all hearts, and invoke his divine blessing."

NOTE.—The reader will perceive by referring to the article on "Revivals," contained in the preceding pages, an extract from the Evangelical Witness, stating that the Reformed Dutch Church had condemned the Hopkinsian errors; (subsequently however, to the separation.) If this statement be correct, it destroys the validity of one of the most important reasons contained in the manifesto.

SINGULAR PROPOSITION.

A proposition has been made in the British house of Commons by a Mr. Robertson, to unite the Protestants and Catholics of Ireland, in order, as is alleged, to tranquilize the present state of fermentation with which that country is afflicted. In consequence of this proposition a letter has been addressed to Mr. Robertson by the Bishop of Kildare, in which he expresses a conviction, that "if

the Protestant and Catholic Divines of learning, and a conciliatory character, were summoned by the Crown, to ascertain the points of agreement and difference between the Churches, and the result of their conferences made the basis of a project to be treated upon between the heads of the Church of Rome and of England, the result might be more favourable than at present would be anticipated."

"The chief points to be discussed are the Canon of the Sacred Scriptures, Faith, Justification, the Mass, the Sacraments, the Authority of tradition, of Councils, of the Pope, the Celibacy of the Clergy, Language of the Liturgy, Invocation of Saints, respect for Images, Prayers for the Dead."

It is very easily discovered, notwithstanding the liberal sentiments expressed by the Bishop, that he is still ardently attached to all the fooleries of the Church of Rome. We do not believe that the Protestants of Ireland, are yet so degraded, as to be prepared for a serious discussion of "the Mass, respect for Images, Prayers for the Dead," &c. &c.—even if the Bishop's insinuation be *true*, that "the Catholic Clergy have despoiled them, in many places, of their flocks."

BETHEL SOCIETY.

We notice with pleasure the recent formation of the Bethel Society in this city, which has for its object the dissemination of the gospel among those persons, who are employed through the week on the river, and at the pier now erecting opposite the city; but who seldom enter a place of public worship.—Divine service is now regularly performed twice every Sabbath, on board some one of the sloops lying at the wharf.—It reflects honour upon our Clergy that they have, with a becoming zeal, uni-

tedly engaged in this manner, in proclaiming the gospel to a class of men, whose religious privileges are few, and who are consequently sunk to a state of moral degradation.

COMMUNICATED.

Ordained.—On Wednesday, the 7th July, MR. JAMES IRVINE by the Associate Presbytery of Cambridge, to the pastoral charge of the Associate Congregation of Hebron, Washington County, in this State. The REV. ANDREW STARK, New-York, preached and presided on this occasion. After putting the questions of the Formula, and offering up the ordination prayer, Mr. Stark delivered the respective charges to minister and people, both of which are inserted in the present number of the Monitor. The audience was very large, and the whole of the services were conducted in the open air. The scene was solemn and interesting. May the gracious Redeemer eminently prosper the administration of the gospel and its ordinances in that congregation.

Best mode of Christianizing the Indians.

BY MR. LAIRD.

On this subject I wish to suggest a few things. The establishing of schools among the heathen tribes is perhaps the readiest way, which could be adopted, of bringing them to embrace the religion of the blessed Redeemer. But it leaves such as have arrived at maturity of age, out of view; at least in a great measure. It obliges the children to learn a foreign language, before they can read the scriptures. It is liable to be opposed by all the na-

tional prejudices and feelings of the people. I grant, that it is better to take the children and educate them than to let them grow up in ignorance of God the Father, and of Jesus Christ, whom he has sent. The plan is good as far as it goes. But, It is defective, in as much as it does not, in a direct manner, tend to the salvation of those who have attained to riper age:—of *men and women*. Surely their souls are as precious, as the souls of their offspring. Something is therefore wanted to be done for *their* benefit. The glad-tidings of salvation they must be made to hear. How can this be effected? Manifestly in only one way. Let suitable men thrust themselves into the wilderness—prepared to undergo every hardship—to live as the Indians live—to go with them from place to place—to sit down patiently to the study of their language, so that they may be able to preach the gospel to them in a known tongue. It would be necessary for these heralds of the cross to be men of the most ardent zeal—of the utmost self-denial—of untiring diligence—and of the greatest purity of life. If twenty such messengers were now to go amongst our northwestern Indians, there is every reason to believe, that in ten years' time, churches would be organized throughout the country, and hundreds converted from their miserable infatuation. The people would listen to one who could address them fluently in their vernacular language.

It is all a mistake that there is any thing especially hostile to the Gospel in the minds of the Indians.—Give them a fair opportunity of understanding what is said—tell them the simple tale of the Lord

Jesus Christ having come into the world to seek and save such lost beings as themselves—show them their misery and degradation, and point them to a blessed immortality beyond the grave: and, by the influence of the Divine Spirit, which might be confidently expected under such circumstances, they would hear, and believe, and embrace.

Rel. Chron.

SUMMARY.

Theological Seminary.—It is stated in the Christian Advocate, that the Professorship in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, which the Synod of Philadelphia engaged to found, is likely soon to be completely endowed. The endowment is D25,000, and of this amount D18,000 are already secured. Of this latter sum, the Presbyterians of Philadelphia have contributed D13,000. The Presbyterians of Baltimore, within the same time, have contributed D4,500. The remaining D7,000 there is every reason to believe will be secured before the end of the year. If the other Synods, which have engaged to found professorships, shall act with equal spirit and liberality, as we hope they will, we shall expect that the directors of the Seminary will be able to report to the next General Assembly, that their theological institution has all its professorships established on permanent funds. In the mean time, however, it should be remembered that a considerable sum should be raised by congregational collections, to defray the current expenses of the year. We hope these collections will be liberal; and if they are, there is a flattering prospect that

they are the last which will be needed for the support of the professors.—*Pitts. Recorder.*

Bombay. A letter from Mr. Graves, missionary at this station, bearing date, Jan. 13, 1824, says, there is no special news to be communicated, in relation to the mission. He remarks, however, that the influence of the Gospel on the minds of the natives generally is increasing; and also that a greater number than formerly, attended at the chapel, as well as at many of the schools.

The Presbytery of Glasgow at their meeting in the beginning of May, unanimously agreed to send a respectful letter to Earl Bathurst, representing the claims of Presbyterians in the West Indies to public countenance and favour.

Dickinson College.—On the 30th of June, the annual commencement of Dickinson College was held in the Presbyterian church, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The degree of A. B. was conferred on twenty-four young gentlemen.

Union College.—On Wednesday the 28th ult. the annual commencement of Union College was held. The degree of A. B. was conferred on seventy-nine young gentlemen.

The degree of Master of Arts, was conferred on seventeen.

The honorary degree of D. D. was conferred on the Rev. William Rafferty, Principal of St. John's College, Maryland. Rev. Lucius Bowles, Fellow of Brown University, R. I. Rev. Ernest Hazelius, Hartwick, N. Y.

The honorary degree of L. L. D. was conferred on Mr. John

Griscom, Chemical Professor, N. Y.

The degree of A. M. was conferred on the Rev. Lewis Leonard, of Albany, Rev. Samuel Lucky, of New-Haven, Conn. Rev. Mr. Prentiss, of Athens N. Y. Rev. William A. Clark, of N. Y.

Columbia College.—The annual commencement of Columbia College took place yesterday, when the degree of Bachelor of Arts, was conferred on twenty-three young gentlemen.

The degree of Master of Arts, was conferred on the following gentlemen, Alumni of Columbia College, viz.—Henry J. Whitehouse, Isaac Low, Wm. H. Munn, Wm. P. Hawes, Wm. Turner and John Tiebout.

The honorary degree of Master of Arts, was conferred on the Rev. Levi S. Ives, Rev. Wm. A. Clark, James Cooper, and James K. Paulding. *N. Y. Patriot, July 4.*

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The Atonement.—Proposals are issued for publishing by subscription, four sermons on the doctrine of the Atonement, by Nathan S. S. Beman, pastor of the Presbyterian church in Troy. The first Sermon is on the necessity, the second and third are on the nature, and the fourth is on the extent of the atonement. The work is to be printed in the duodecimo form: Price to Subscribers will be, in boards, 50 cents; neatly bound and lettered, 75 cents.

Professor Stewart of Andover, has recently published two Sermons on the Atonement, 8vo. pp. 54. Flagg & Gould printers: Boston.

A Tour in Italy, in the year

1821, with a description of Gibraltar, accompanied with several engravings, by AN AMERICAN, price two dollars; has just been published in New-York.

Recently, in Washington city, Notes on Mexico, made in the autumn of 1822, accompanied by an historical sketch of the Revolution, By the Hon. J. R. Poinsett.

Two Sermons, delivered in the Baptist church, Augusta, Georgia. 1st, On parental duties. 2d, The Judgment of Enemies in Favour of Religion. By Wm. T. Brantly, A. M. Pastor of the church, and Rector of the Richmond Academy. *Col. Star.*

The Massachusetts Baptist education Society, says The Columbian Star, has now under its patronage between twenty and thirty young men, preparing for the ministry.

Contributions to the United Foreign Missionary Society, during the Month of June last, amounted to 1,047 dollars 60 cents.

The Presbyterian church at Morristown, have, at a recent congregational meeting, given a call to the Rev. Mr. Griswold, late of Ballston, N. Y.

Rev. Professor M'Clelland has declined his appointment to the Presidency of Dickinson College, in consequence of a desire to continue his professorship.

We learn that the proprietors of the new line of Stages between Buffalo and New-York, by the way of Ithica, Oswego, &c. have made such arrangements as to avoid travelling on the Sabbath. Would that the example might be extensively circulated.—*Western Recorder.*

The New-York Presbytery at their late session, received the American Presbyterian church in Montreal, U. C. under their care.

ORDAINED.—On Wednesday June 30th, Rev. Charles Soule, as pastor over the first Congregational church in Belfast, Me.

In Trenton N. J. on the 10th of June, over the Baptist church, Rev. Griffith Jones.

On Wednesday, June 30th, Rev.

Calvin Lincoln, over the first Congregational church and society in Fitchburg.

In Steuben, N. Y. on the 16th of June, over the second Baptist church, Rev. Jesse Jones.

INSTALLED.—On Wednesday, June 3d, Rev. Mr. Benedict, over the church in Vernon, Conn.

On Thursday June the 4th, Rev. Mr. Burt, over the church in Manchester, Conn.

GLEANINGS.

The difficulty of praying Arminianism.—Mr. W—— a respectable Calvinistic minister in R—— being visited by a young candidate for the ministry, on Sabbath invited him to preach. He readily consented and delivered an ingenious Arminian Sermon, though his prayer was very Calvinistic.—When the service was over, Mr. W——thanked him for his kindness, but told him that as they did not agree in sentiment, he could not invite him to preach again;—but continued he I have a favour to ask of you; when you go home will you set down and write a prayer to agree with the sentiments you have this day been preaching?—will you commit it to memory go into your closet and repeat it to God? The young man promised to do it. Accordingly when he went home he wrote the prayer, committed it to memory went into his closet and attempted to repeat it; but found through the power of conscience that he could not. A few years afterwards he came to Mr. W—— Mr. W. soon recollected him, and received him cordially. The young gentleman of-

fered to preach for him; Mr. W. at last reluctantly consented. Accordingly the young gentleman went into the pulpit; and, to the great astonishment of Mr. W. delivered a sound, sensible Calvinistic Sermon. When the service was over, Mr. W. asked him why he had altered his sentiments; the young gentleman asked him if he did not recollect a favour he had a few years ago requested of him? and being answered in the affirmative, he related the circumstances, and added that being greatly agitated, as well as surprised, he had carefully examined his sentiments, and had reasoned thus with himself:—can it be proper for me to preach to a congregation what I cannot offer up in prayer to God?

To this anecdote may be added what Dr. Owen says in his "Doctrine of Justification." "It has been observed that the schoolmen themselves, in their meditations and devotional writings, wherein they had immediate thought of God, with whom they had to do, speak quite a different language as to justification before God, than they do in their wrangling, philosophical, fiery disputes about it; and I had ra-

ther learn what men really think on this subject, from their prayers than from their writings. Nor do I remember that I did ever hear any good man, in his prayers, use any expressions about justification, or pardon for sin, wherein any plea from any thing in themselves was introduced. Nor have I observed that any public liturgies (the mass-book excepted, wherein there is a frequent recourse unto the merits, and intercession of saints) do guide men in their prayers before God, to plead any thing for their acceptance with him, or as the means or condition thereof, but grace, mercy, the righteousness and blood of Christ alone."

THE PROVERBIALIST.

Sins and debts are always more than we take them to be.

Riches have made more covetous men, than covetousness has made rich men.

Point not at others' spots with a foul finger.

Not to go forward in religion is to go backward.

Religion without piety has done more mischief in the world than all things put together.

Religion is the best armour but the worst cloak.

Seek not to correct every ones dial by your watch.

Impatience makes every ill double, but content makes it none at all.

The best way to see divine light is to put out thy own candle.

When we do ill the devil tempteth us, when we do nothing we tempt the devil.

The Heathens FORTUNE is the Christians PROVIDENCE.

Poverty is not a shame, but the being ashamed of it is.

The man that *lives* as if he had the estate he knows he has not, doth as truly lie, as if he was all day long to express it in words.

The notion of grace may be abused to licentiousness; the principle never can.

St. Bernards three Questions.

St. Bernard was wont to put three questions to himself, before engaging in any work:—1, Is it lawful? may I do it and not sin?—2, Is it becoming me as a Christian? may I do it and not wrog my profession? 3, Is it expedient? may I do it and not offend my weak brethren?

CHRIST THE WAY OF SALVATION.

All the advantages which the things of the world, together with the help and favour of men, can afford; all the opinions, sincerity, devoutness, good-meanings, and the most assiduous endeavours to walk according to the law, being without Christ, are of no avail to our salvation.—DR. ANDERSON.

FAITH.

To abide in the faith, is to abide in the truth which faith receives, and on which it relies.—*Ib.*

SERVING GOD.

God delights in our serving him; not because he is the better for it, but because we shall be so.

THE CHRISTIAN HOPE.

Let the Christian's cross be as heavy as it will, he has a crown of pardon and life to put against it in the balance of the promises. Standing on the rock of the divine promises, he can say—"Heaven is mine; and there are my God, my Father, my Redeemer, my Comforter, my

kindred, the friends of my youth. Though I must pass through a vale of tears, and through the dark valley of death, yet how reviving is it to know, that I am now in the way that leads to that blessed kingdom, where every tear shall be wiped away, and where the heart shall be gladdened with the light of eternity, and with the fulness of joy.



TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The article "On modern liberality in Religion," transcribed from the Christian Monitor, by our correspondent P. B. A. has been received; but it came to hand too late for insertion in the present number. It shall appear in our next.

We acknowledge the correctness of the remarks made by a correspondent, respecting the typographical execution of our work, and shall endeavour to profit by them.

We take this opportunity to suggest to our correspondents, that they would confer an essential favour, by sending us pieces similar to those which will be found in the present number under the head of "Gleanings," for the most of which we are indebted to P. B. A.

The friendly reception which has been given to the Religious Monitor, by the friends of truth in different places, although it presented itself to them in rather a homely dress, demands our warmest thanks; and encourages us to greater exertion in the improvement of the work. It is true, it

has met the opposition, as was expected, of those professed friends of the Redeemer, who believe, that because there may be Christians among those denominations, many of whose tenets are manifestly repugnant to the truth and simplicity of the gospel, we cannot, without violating the rules of Christian charity, oppose their errors.

It is a fact, which should awaken our zeal for the truth, that many of those Christians who have adopted, and sworn to maintain, most excellent standards, expressive of the sense in which they understand the scriptures, are violently opposed to many of the doctrines therein exhibited:—and nothing will more irritate them, than to insist upon some of these fundamental truths as being of vital importance.—They consider all doctrinal discussion unprofitable, and not to be engaged in by those, who have at heart the welfare of the souls of men. Say they, "the interests of immortal souls should not be brought in competition with theological disputations." Strange perversion of reason and scripture.—*How is the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed!*

But we only intended a notice to correspondents and patrons, and must therefore, dismiss this subject with the hope, that it will be taken up and discussed in a practical manner, by some of our correspondents.